

MEETING OF CHIEFS OF STATE AND HEADS OF GOVERNMENT
Paris, May, 1960

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Date: May 14, 1960
Time: Dinner
Place: Palais d'Orsay



Participants:

United States

Livingston T. Merchant

Great Britain

Selwyn Lloyd

Subject: U-2 and Detente at Summit

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I was seated next to Selwyn Lloyd and during dinner he brought up the U-2.

I told him there were many obvious factors which went into the decision including, in my mind, the question of Congressional and public opinion in the United States in the event that the original cover story was adhered to in spite of the weight of evidence which Khrushchev was able visibly to produce.

Finally, Mr. Lloyd asked me if I knew anything of Frank Buchman and the Moral Rearmament movement. When I replied I had heard of it, he said he thought "confession was good for the soul," and it was his opinion that the President should have a long, frank confessional talk with Mr. Khrushchev alone. The important thing was to remove the U-2 from the Summit context. I said that the latter was up to Mr. Khrushchev and not the President. I said, moreover, that I could not imagine the President being in a "confessional" frame of mind.

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The conversation then shifted and he repeated to me what he had said at Istanbul, namely, "a detente suits us." I said I agreed with one proviso.

I said that was that we should not pay anything which impaired in the slightest our security or our principles for a detente. He agreed wholeheartedly but said he was under the impression that some of us really did not want a detente. I said on the contrary, as far as I was concerned, I thought a prolonged period of relaxation with major competition with the Russians confined to the economic sphere would pose more problems for the Russians than for ourselves. I did not minimize, however, the fact that such a relaxation would create problems on the Western side. Nevertheless, I thought the internal dangers and risks which would thereby be created for the Soviet Government were substantially greater than the difficulties we might encounter. He agreed.

HW
USDEL:LTMerchant:sp
May 15, 1960

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